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RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION,

AS SET FORTH IN THE

Formularies of the Westminster Divines,

AND OF THE

CHURCHES OF HOLLAND.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
JER. VI. 16.

ALBANY:

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ART. I. *Brief Discourses on Popery.*

DISCOURSE I.

2 Thess. ii : 8—10. "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; *even him* whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

The fact that the only wise God overrules the wickedness of his creatures, for the accomplishment of his own good and gracious purposes, is frequently made the subject of our public discourses. And although we may not be able to give a satisfactory reply to the question—Why did God, a Being of infinite holiness, permit the first entrance of sin into the world? yet we do all that can reasonably be required of us, if we can shew that the entrance of evil made way for the entrance of greater good. When this has been done, it will then be impossible to prove that the sum total of human happiness has been diminished by the permission of evil; or even that the entrance of sin may not have been, upon the whole, advantageous, instead of being detrimental to the human race. This does not indeed amount to a reason why God should have permitted the apostacy of man, but it is sufficient to check every disposition in us to impeach his goodness for permitting the entrance of sin.

But I shall for the present waive all further reference to a question which is indeed most momentous, but which all attempts to elucidate have only rendered more perplexed. It will be more profitable for us to consider how God has, from the beginning, overruled the evil designs of his creatures, for promoting the accomplishment of his own gracious ends.

It is quite evident that, since the first entrance of sin into the world, there has been going on a perpetual warfare between good and evil—between the holy God and sinful men. The object and aim of sinners being to turn good into evil, and of God to bring good out of evil. The operation of these two opposite principles was so apparent even to the heathen, that they imagined there were two opposite classes of deities. The one class occupied in doing good, and the other in promoting evil. By divine revelation, we have been brought to a more correct knowledge of this subject. From it we learn that there is a continual warfare going on between the opposite principles of good and evil, and that all good is attributed to the Creator, and all evil to the creature. The earth, originally the habitation of the innocent, has by the apostacy of man, been convert-

ed into a battle field, on which Satan and his emissaries wage war against Jehovah and his angels.

This warfare between good and evil lies open to the inspection of the higher orders of spiritual beings. "We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses." And "there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." It may seem strange, that a contest which occupies the attention of the invisible world, should be indifferent to so large a portion of the human race. But with the aid of the Bible, we can easily solve the difficulty. It shews us that the warfare is a contest for the soul of man. The battle is fought on the narrow field of the hearts of individuals. So that till the war is carried into a man's own bosom, he is actually a stranger to the incessant struggle that is perpetually going on around him. But when God sends his grace into his soul, the whole matter is made plain. The mystery is explained in the conflict between grace and corruption in his own heart.

But there are occasions on which the warfare is maintained by thousands on a side—when the enemies of God advance to the contest under the standard of infidelity, superstition or idolatry, and when the good soldiers of Jesus Christ stand firm under the banner which he hath given "to be displayed because of the truth." Then the war is visible. Men see it and take part in it, as if it were an engagement between the armies of rival chiefs.

This war has been waged incessantly ever since earth was invaded from hell. The enmity of the seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman, has never been suspended. He who was a liar from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, has never ceased to oppose and pervert the truth. But though this opposition to the truth has been substantially the same in all ages, yet it has been carried on in various forms, and under different names. In times of grosser ignorance, false gods were set up in opposition to the one living and true God, and worship was offered to Baal, Ashtaroth and the host of heaven. But under the New Testament dispensation, this opposition took a more systematic form. It usurped the name of Christianity, and engrafted on it the idolatry and immorality of Paganism, and thus it sought to destroy christianity, by assuming the name of christianity.

This, in the language of scripture, is called anti-christ—the mystery of iniquity—the man of sin, and the son of perdition. To illustrate the impure character of this mystery of iniquity, it is described as "the great whore which sitteth upon many waters," and "which corrupteth the earth with her abominations." It is my intention to give some account of this great apostacy, for the purpose of warning persons against it, and, if possible, to reclaim some from its deadly influence.

My present discourse is merely introductory. The object of it is to shew—First, that a great Apostacy, which can be identified with Popery, was early and distinctly predicted. Secondly, that its destruction is foretold. And, thirdly, That the means of its destruction are also predicted.

I. Let us attend to the fact, that the rise of a great apostacy, that can be identified with Popery, was early and distinctly predicted.

By early predicting the rise of this great apostacy, the Holy Spirit gave warning of the evil that was coming on the world, that the true worshippers of God might be on their guard, and that such as might be seduced from the faith, might be left without excuse. Accordingly many intimations of this are given in the Old Testament Scriptures. The union between God and his people is compared to the marriage relation. Thus it is said in the prophecy of Jeremiah: "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth and the love of thine espousals." And in Isaiah, "Thy

Maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name." Accordingly, so long as the church maintains her fidelity, she is called the spouse of Christ. But when she is seduced from her allegiance, and falls away into idolatry, she is styled "the strange woman, who forgetteth the covenant of her God"—"the great whore that sitteth upon many waters," and "the woman who hath on her forehead a name written, mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

Lest it should be thought, that these expressions are vague and indefinite, let us fix on those passages where the same system of wickedness is marked out with a precision that cannot easily be mistaken. One of these is in Daniel vii: 23. "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces." Here the rise of this apostacy is predicted under the figure of the coming up of a horn, which is the emblem of power and dominion. The four successive monarchies are represented as so many wild beasts. The fourth, which is the fiercest of all, is allowed on all hands to be the Roman Empire. "The ten horns out of this kingdom" are also understood to signify so many kingdoms. Besides these, another little horn was to "arise after them," diverse from all the rest. It was to spring up unobserved, till it overtopped them all. (v. 24, 26.) "And he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three Kings; and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Nothing can be more evident, than that these words predict the rise and progress of a great apostacy from God, and that they describe the greatest temporal and spiritual dominion that ever existed on earth.

There are two passages in the epistles of Paul where the same power and apostacy are described with equal precision and still more minuteness, viz: (2 Thess. ii: 1—12.) "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way: And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." And 1 Tim. iv: 1—3. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron: forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which

God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." In these two passages we have the description of a power of the most gigantic character; from its smallest encroachment on christian liberty, till it sits in the temple of God, claiming absolute authority over the souls and bodies of men.

Here two questions arise. First: Do Daniel and Paul describe the same power, the same apostacy, and the same mystery of iniquity? From a careful perusal and comparison of their writings, it will, I think, be evident that they treat of the same system of wickedness. Daniel's horn was to subdue three kings, (or kingdoms,) and Paul's Man of Sin was to exalt himself above all that is called God.—Daniel's horn was to speak great words against the Most High. Paul's Man of Sin was to sit in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Daniel's horn was to think to change times and laws: and Paul's Man of Sin was to forbid to marry, and to command to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving. And finally, Daniel's horn was to have his dominion taken away, and to be consumed and destroyed even unto the end; and of Paul's Man of Sin it is said, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming." If we compare these two descriptions, a very little reflection will serve to convince us, that the horn and the Man of Sin are the same tyranny. Their language, their crimes, their duration and their ends, are the same.

Secondly. Can this great apostacy, so minutely described by Daniel and Paul, be identified with Popery? This can easily be ascertained by comparing the account given of the great apostacy with the Decrees of the Council of Trent, and the creed of Pius IV., together with the Papal Bulls which have been subsequently issued. I do not mean to affirm that a complete and perfect knowledge of the Romish Faith can be derived from these sources alone. For in the Decrees of Trent and in the Papal Confession, many things are expressed in a vague and ambiguous manner. Some tenets also are omitted in both, which no Roman Catholic is permitted to call in question. Still these are the accredited standards of the Romish church, and held sacred by every Papist; and I refer to *them* because I wish to ascribe to them no tenets, except those which are openly avowed in the Formularies of their Church. It is also worthy of notice, that the articles of the Romish faith received their finishing touch at the Council of Trent, which met in 1545, and sat the greater part of twenty years, with several interruptions.

The descriptions of the anti-christian apostacy, to be found in the prophecy of Daniel, and in the Epistles of Paul, will, in fact, agree to no other system but that of Popery. This can be easily proved by descending to particulars. Thus it is said of the horn in Daniel—"He shall subdue three kings," or kingdoms, and it is well known that the Head of the Romish Church raised himself to great power by seizing on three principalities, viz: The Exarchate of Ravenna, the Kingdom of the Lombards and the Dukedom of Rome, as noticed by Sir Isaac Newton and other writers. It is said of the horn, "He shall speak great words against the Most High," and the Popes lay claim to the title of his "Holiness"—"Our Lord God the Pope," and "God's Vicar on earth." It is said of the horn, he "shall think to change times and laws;" and it is well known that the Church of Rome claims a right and has exercised it, to constitute holy-days and sacred festivals. And as to laws, she has struck one of the commandments out of the decalogue, and by claiming the power to forgive sins, has affected to make the law of God just what she pleases. And finally, it is said of the horn, he "shall wear out the saints of the Most High." And the well attested fact, that greater numbers of

mankind have perished on the score of religion, during the reign of the Papal power, than in any equal period of time since the world began, clearly proves that this can be more truly affirmed of Popery than of any other power.

The apostle Paul predicts the same things which had been foretold by the prophet Daniel, and adds other particulars. He mentions in particular, the doctrine of Devils, or Demons, that is, the worshipping of saints—forbidding to marry—speaking lies in hypocrisy and false miracles. And in fact describes the whole system of Popery from forbidding to eat flesh on certain days, up to the supremacy of one who puts himself in the place of God and exercises unlimited authority over the souls and bodies of men. All these characteristics clearly identify Popery with the little horn of Daniel, and with the Man of Sin and son of perdition of the Apostle Paul. I proceed to notice,

II. The destruction of this system, called the Mystery of Iniquity, is foretold. It is said in Daniel, “the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld them, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake. I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame.” (Chap. vii: 10, 11.) The “judgment set,” in this passage, is obviously not the last judgment, because after the judgment and destruction of the beast, the nations of the world are given to the Son of Man, “whose dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away.” (Chap. vii: 14.) But it is the judgment and destruction of the great apostacy, the same with the “judgment of the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication,” mentioned in the apocalypse. This is perfectly agreeable to the apostolic account of the downfall of the Man of Sin, that wicked or lawless one, “whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”

But when is this anti-christian system to be destroyed? To this question no very definite answer can be given. It is generally conceded that its destruction is to take place 1260 prophetic days, that is, years after its commencement; but it cannot be ascertained with certainty when this period began. It is allowed that the mystery of iniquity was already working in the time of the Apostles, and that it grew up gradually, but so imperceptibly that it cannot be determined with precision when it became organically the Man of Sin. Hence we have many opinions about the time of the rise of anti-christ, which almost necessarily leads to as many opinions about the time of his downfall. Some writers have fixed on so early a period, that if 1260 years be added to it, it will bring us to the time of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. Others have fixed on the time when the Pope was declared Universal Bishop in 607, to which if we add 1260, it will give 1867 as the period of the fall of anti-christ. And others still have fixed on 757 when the Pope became a temporal prince, to which if we add 1260, it will give 2017 as the time when the Man of Sin is to be destroyed. But as there may be but little wisdom in inquiring too curiously about “the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power,” I will therefore pass on to the other point to be considered, viz:

III. *The means by which this system of wickedness is to be destroyed.*—This is a matter about which we are left in no kind of uncertainty. For if we enquire how this mystery of iniquity is to be rooted out of the world, the inspired apostle answers the question—“Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”

Many indeed have asserted that anti-christ will be destroyed by means of dreadful temporal judgments, which have been described as the vials

of the wrath of God to be poured out on the seat of the beast. Such as pestilences, earthquakes and desolating wars. Such judgments may indeed come on the world, and it is not unlikely that the adherents and supporters of the Man of Sin may be visited with heavy calamities, still it is difficult to see how these could effect his destruction. On the contrary it seems to be intimated that they will tend to render him and his supporters more sinful. (Rev. xvi : 10, 11.) "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Indeed I can see no reason to believe that the Man of Sin can be destroyed by any material weapon, and there is reason to think that his enmity can only be slain by the spirit of God's mouth, and consumed by the brightness of his coming; that is, by the gospel of his grace, the rod of his great strength, by which his enemies are subdued and turned to himself.

The Man of Sin then can only be destroyed by a spiritual weapon, and that weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This is the spirit of God's mouth, by which delusion and idolatry will be swept away, when by the brightness of his coming to spread the gospel through the world, all nations shall be converted to Messiah. Then the mystery of iniquity shall be destroyed, and the Lord shall be one in all the earth, and his name one.

The vision of the prophet Daniel relating to the destruction of anti-christ, appears to lead us to the same conclusion. "I beheld," says he, (Chap. vii : 9, 10,) "till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head likd the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set and the books were opened," &c. It is reasonable to suppose that this "fiery stream" is something of the same nature, if not the very same with the spirit of God's mouth, mentioned by the apostle. If so, then the thousand thousands that minister to the Ancient of Days, and the ten thousand times ten thousand that stood before him, will be the ministers of Christ enlightened by his Spirit to carry the tidings of salvation through the world, by which means the power and influence of the Man of Sin will be destroyed, and all nations converted to Christ. Agreeably to this interpretation, Christ is said in Revelations ii : 16, to fight with the sword of his mouth. He subdues his enemies by the irresistible energy of his word, which is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It lays open the human heart, slays its enmity against God, is the instrument of converting the sinner to God, and of bringing every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. It is therefore fitly represented as the adequate means of the destruction of the great apostacy.

In conclusion.—You will, I trust, perceive the way in which the Man of Sin is to be destroyed. It is by the light and influence of the gospel of Christ. His power and influence will cease for ever, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii : 27.)

But you may ask what is our duty in relation to the mystery of ini-

quity! It is to pray for its destruction. Its downfall is predicted for this express purpose—that being matter of promise, it may be also a subject of prayer. But you are also to keep the truth, and to hold fast the profession of your faith, and to labor to extend the knowledge of true Christianity. Every one who sends a Bible to those who are destitute of the word of God, and every one who persuades his neighbor to read it, or who is the means of turning a sinner from the error of his way, does something towards the accomplishment of this great work. He is helping on the destruction of the Man of Sin, and the fulfilment of the promise, that the kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.—When the great voice shall be heard, as the voice of many waters, saying, salvation and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God. Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

ART. II. *The Secession Testimony abundantly consistent with Liberty of Conscience, in a Letter to a Friend.*

(Concluded from page 28.)

“The wisdom that is from above,” &c. James iii. 17.

If any should ask why we don't bear testimony against the mismanagements of the period between 1638 and 1650,—especially while we bear a very particular testimony against the evils of the different periods since that time? the answer is easy and short:—Both Church and State in that period, were in a commendable progress towards further and further degrees of reformation; so our proper duty with reference thereunto, is, to bear testimony to the good things of it, and to imitate them. Whereas, both Church and State, in the different periods since that time, have been, for the most part in a culpable progress towards further and further degrees of deformation, without ever returning to the ancient reformation; and so our proper duty with reference thereunto, is, to bear testimony against the evils thereof, and to avoid them.

If what has been laid down upon this head be duly adverted to, the difficulty will at once disappear. How our complaints against the revolution settlement are reconcilable with the principles of religious liberty, advanced in the preceding part of this letter. We maintain, it is true, that supernatural religion, as such, is not cognizable by the civil magistrate as such; and yet we complain that the covenanted reformation as such, was entirely overlooked and disregarded in the revolution settlement.

But it is to be remembered, that we no where complain, that the revolution-parliament did not, in their legislative capacity, sustain themselves as judges of a covenanted reformation. But what we complain of, is, that they did not, from a conviction, in their Christian capacity, of the binding obligation of the several parts of attained-to reformation, both by scripture and the oath of our covenants, revive former laws, in so far as they warranted and authorized a free and open profession thereof, and abolish the wicked laws which had been enacted in contradiction hereunto, in the preceding period of apostacy and persecution; hereby manifesting, that however illegal and unwarrantable in the eye of the law, it had been for some time past to make profession of a covenanted reformation,—all might now expect their countenance and encouragement in a public avouchment thereof. The former would be inconsistent with religious liberty, but not the latter. This may be illustrated by an easy similitude. Suppose the heretors of a parish in Scotland, or the mana-

gers of a congregation in the Secession, met about building or repairing their place of public worship; they have no occasion to judge of that profession of religion which is made or to be made therein; that point being already determined, and they fully satisfied about the warrantableness and necessity thereof. But they are very proper judges of what is necessary to be done, for protecting themselves and their fellow-worshippers from the hardships of having no house to assemble in, or only a very bad one; and they are to judge and act accordingly. And supposing they did not much mind what sort of a church or meeting house they had, it would be a shrewd evidence they as little regarded that profession of religion which was made therein. Just so, supposing the members of the revolution parliament to have been genuine and hearty members of the covenanted church of Scotland, in agreeableness to their bounden duty; they had no occasion to judge of a covenanted reformation, it was a matter already judged and determined. But what remained for them to do, was, to show themselves to be zealous and steadfast members thereof, by securing to themselves, their fellow professors, and posterity—the liberty of a free and open profession of all the several parts of attained reformation, against all that would attempt to deprive them of it, as had been the case in the preceding period; hereby encouraging all to the profession thereof accordingly.

2. It is in like manner competent unto, and consequently incumbent on the magistrate, to provide the church in an honorable patrimony, and to protect her in the possession and enjoyment of it, against all invaders whatsoever; for the support of schools and colleges, in order to the training up of young men to a fitness for the work of the ministry, and for the maintenance of those who are employed in the ministry of the church. A proper provision for the ministers of the gospel, who have devoted themselves to the service of the church, is a just debt to them. The apostle said no more than what common sense dictates, when he thus expostulated with the Corinthians, in his first epistle to them: Chap. ix: 11, 14. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?* If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." And by the same reason that this is due, the support of schools and colleges for the purpose just now mentioned, is also due. And why in this case may not a law be passed for the payment of it accordingly. Whatever may have been the bad consequences of a legal stipend, as giving encouragement to a corrupt and lazy ministry; this makes nothing against what has been just now advanced. Because it is not here supposed, that the magistrate is under any manner of obligations to *such* a ministry; the magistrate spoken of in the Confession, and who is all along spoken of in this letter, is such a one as is also a Christian, making a due profession of the true religion, and in communion with a church which, instead of obstinately persisting in corrupt and backsliding courses, is endeavoring the maintenance of truth and purity, or at least is willing to be reformed; it is such a magistrate, and such a church, as are disposed to be mutually assisting to one another in reformation work, that are here treated of. Now, it is easy to see, that such a magistrate securing that such a church be properly provided for, must be eminently for the maintenance and advancement of truth and reformation. Were the great ones of the earth to do their duty in this matter, there would be no complaints of the scarcity of

the gospel. And it has been often observed, that one of the most crafty methods, which *Julian the apostate* took for the rooting out of Christianity, was his demolishing the churches, forbidding the schools of Christians, and refusing support to their ministers.

3. It is also competent unto, and consequently incumbent on the magistrate, to grant unto the church, as a Society, in common with other Societies, the privileges of a *body corporate*; that is to say, the privilege of being viewed and acknowledged in law as *one individual*; taking the privileges granted unto her, by her great Lord under the protection of law; and recognizing the title she has from him, of being ruled by officers and laws of his giving, which can never be prejudicial, but must always be beneficial to the common weal.

4. It is further competent unto, and consequently incumbent on the magistrate, to see and provide that his subjects be not left destitute of a faithful gospel ministry. You will not imagine (I think) it warrantable for him to obtrude a gospel minister on any, obliging them to countenance his ministrations by civil penalties: but he is to lay out himself, in his station and capacity, and according to the opportunities which he must needs have in his power, for the provision of all those who are willing to have the gospel faithfully dispensed among them; he is to take care that it be not through any negligence on his part, that his people are deprived of it. And as magistrates, laying out themselves for getting their dominions planted with ministers who are hearty and steadfast in the cause of truth and reformation, is a main part of their duty for the maintenance of religion in its purity and integrity; so it cannot but be of eminent advantage thereunto. If the magistrates and town council of Edinburgh, for example, were to improve the opportunities which providence puts into their hands, for getting the city provided with a faithful gospel ministry, even without assuming any pre-eminence above the people in the choice of their pastors, they might be supposed to get the best at least that the church could afford. But what a wonderful change would be seen through the whole land, if all our magistrates, supreme and subordinate, (and in this latitude, you'll observe, I all along understand and use the word *magistrate*;) what a wonderful change, I say, would speedily take place, if they were all to lay out themselves honestly and vigorously, for getting all the churches planted with the firm friends of religion and reformation.

5. It is still further competent unto, and consequently incumbent on the magistrate, to encourage and support the church, or such members thereof as are most fit and hearty, in their essays for propagating the knowledge of the true religion, particularly in such parts of his dominions as are destitute of the knowledge thereof. Even Queen Anne did what was incumbent on her in this respect, when, in the year 1709 she erected the *Society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge*, into a *body corporate*, and commanded all her subjects to be assisting and encouraging to them in their pious design; beside contributing liberally for enabling them to carry it into execution.

In one word, the magistrate may do whatever is possible for him to do, provided only he dont encroach on the peculiar jurisdiction of the church, or the consciences of men who may happen to differ from her. I proceed now to consider,

3d. The magistrate's power, in order to the better effecting of the fore-mentioned purposes, *to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.* As this clause is of the same nature with the 2nd section of the 31st Chapter, it is to be understood with the like limitation. Now, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in their act of August 27, 1647, appro-

ving the Confession of Faith, after a very large and hearty approbation of it, do nevertheless declare themselves as follows: "It is further declared, That the Assembly understandeth some parts of the second article of the thirty-one chapter only of kirks not settled, or constituted in point of government: And that although, in such kirks, a synod of ministers, and other fit persons may be called by the magistrate's authority and nomination, without any other call, to consult and advise with about matters of religion; and although, likewise, the ministers of Christ, without delegation from their churches, may of themselves, and by virtue of their office, meet together synodically in such kirks not yet constituted, yet neither of these ought to be done in kirks constituted and settled; it being always free to the magistrate to advise with synods of ministers and ruling elders, meeting upon delegation from their churches, either ordinarily, or, being indicted by his authority, occasionally, and *pro re nata*; it being also free to assemble together synodically, as well *pro re nata* as at the ordinary times, upon delegation from the churches, by the intrinsic power received from Christ, as often as it is necessary for the good of the Church so to assemble, in case the magistrate, to the detriment of the Church, withhold or deny his consent; the necessity of occasional assemblies being first remonstrate unto him by humble supplication." And it is only according to this declaration, that the Confession is avouched by the Associate judicatories; as is to be seen from the formula of questions put to young men at receiving license, and to ministers at their ordination.

Now, as to the *calling of Synods*, I suppose nobody will refuse, but it may be lawful for the civil powers, in a time of general anarchy and disorder, to require such of the office-bearers of the church as they (by the best advice they can have,) may judge most fit for bringing about a proper settlement of matters, to assemble together for that purpose; as in such a time, there is no other can do so; and as in doing it, they only give them a convenient opportunity of doing their duty. Take the *Westminster Assembly* for an instance; their convocation and doctrine serve as natural illustrations of one another. While the kingdom of England was on the point of being torn to pieces, one part forcibly attempting to deprive the other of their liberties, and the other part struggling hard to retain them; it was plainly necessary that the parliament and non-conformist ministers, who were, in their respective stations, to contend for their religious liberties, should agree upon a plan of reformation which they were to contend for accordingly; and consequently, it was as plainly necessary that the parliament should convene the Assembly, in order to their coming to said agreement. Here, there is at least one case in which *this clause* of the Confession manifestly holds good. Whatever imprudencies or irregularities were committed in this business, (and mistakes on all hands are scarce avoidable in such critical circumstances,) it is not my business here to inquire into them; it is sufficient to a justification of the Confession on this point, to show, that in such a conjuncture, it is lawful for the civil powers to call a Synod, for advice and consultation, and in order to the bringing about of peace and harmony. Thus you see the Westminster Assembly lay down a doctrine, though without specifying the times or circumstances in which it holds; but the General Assembly at Edinburgh limit it to such times and circumstances as those in which the Westminster Assembly convened. And this is the sense in which it is understood and maintained in the *Secession*.

It is added, that the magistrate *hath power to be present at such Synods*. But this cannot mean that he may claim to be present at them, in order to control and overrule their proceedings; as in this case there could be no room for consultation and agreement. But the sense must be, that

he may lawfully demand a hearing of their debates pro. and con., (for and against,) in order to satisfaction to his own mind, as to what he shall give countenance and support unto. Thus the Westminster Assembly were, as it were, the parliament's council for religion, as to what they should ask the free exercise or legal establishment of, in their treaties with the King. And nothing could be more reasonable, than that the Assembly should endeavor to give the parliament satisfaction in such matters.

It is further added, that he hath power to *provide that whatsoever is transacted in such Synods, be according to the mind of God.* Now, this cannot be imagined to mean, that his judgment and commands, even supposing them to be ever so agreeable to scripture and reason, must of necessity be complied with by them; because, in this case it were to no purpose to assemble them, but to hear his peremptory decisions; and in the parallel passage they are supposed to be assembled for consultation and advice. "Magistrates may lawfully call a Synod of ministers and other fit persons to consult and advise with about matters of religion." So the meaning can only be, that he is to lay out himself by all such means as are lawful and competent for him, that their determinations may run in agreeableness to the holy scriptures. And though precisely in the character of a magistrate, he is not to interpose his judgment and authority; as this would be to lay his commands on them; yet he is not to be divested of all understanding and conscience in the things of God; and as he may thus propose his doubts and scruples, they cannot but command an attentive and impartial hearing. There is one thing which is altogether competent unto him, precisely in the character of a magistrate, namely, to refuse to give any manner of countenance or support to what he is not assured to be according to the mind of God. He is as little obliged to submit implicitly to the Synod, as the Synod to him. Thus the parliament of England refused to give their consent to some parts of the Confession and form of Presbyterical church government; and however far wrong they were in the thing itself, they did nothing herein but what was competent unto them.

Thus, upon the whole, as church office bearers are not to intermeddle in civil matters, as civil, but only as they respect conscience; yet may be of no small advance for the suppression of whatever is prejudicial to the commonwealth, and the maintenance of whatever is beneficial to it, and are to lay out themselves in their station accordingly. Just so, magistrates are not to intermeddle in spiritual matters, as spiritual, but only as they respect the peace and safety of the commonwealth; yet may be of eminent usefulness for the suppressing of whatever is prejudicial to the truths and church of God, and the defence of all the interests of Christ's kingdom in the world. If in his magistratical capacity, he carry himself suitably to his character as a Christian, as it must be his unquestionable duty to do; he'll act a part answerable to all the duty which the Confession ascribes to him.

What has been advanced on the head of the magistrate's duty as such, may be very properly concluded with the corollaries in which Dr. Owen wraps up his whole treatise of Toleration, viz: "1. That magistrates have nothing to do in matters of religion, as some unadvisedly affirm, is exceedingly wide from the truth of the thing itself. 2. Corporal punishments for simple error were found out to help to build the tower of BABEL."

Secondly. He is to be considered as a Christian. And even in this capacity he may be of eminent usefulness, in respect of all that is assigned to him in the Confession. And it is manifestly his duty to excel in usefulness, in proportion to the dignity of his station as magistrate.

1. He may be of eminent usefulness, by exemplary godliness in his own

person and family. His godly example will be of mighty influence for bringing religion into reputation and esteem with all those of inferior rank. That there is a wonderful efficacy in the example of kings, noblemen, and other great ones, for forming the minds of the lower classes of people, either to good or evil, is so obvious to the observation of all, as to stand in need of no demonstration. The good example of inferiors is sometimes blessed of God even for the conversion of superiors. (1 Peter iii : 1—2.) Much more is the Godly example of superiors calculated for that end.

2. Instead of countenancing any in a state of opposition to the church, in the way of making them his chief companions or otherwise, it is his duty, as an eminent member of the same body, to choose the proved friends of truth and reformation for his friends, and to countenance and encourage the church in all her essays for the defence of truth and the suppression of ungodliness, (see Psalm 101) throughout. And his doing so will be of unspeakable advantage for the curbing of error and the promoting of truth.

3. Instead of taking the advantage of his magistratical office, for making encroachments on the ecclesiastic jurisdiction, it is his duty to show an exemplary submission to it, in every thing of a spiritual nature, submitting with all meekness to the admonitions and reproofs of the office-bearers of the church; even as they are to submit with all humility to his commands and exactions in things of a civil nature; while, without destroying the civil respect that is due to persons on such accounts, the laws of Christ's house admit of no respect of persons on such accounts, in the matter of admission unto, or exclusion from the peculiar privileges thereof. (James ii : 1—9.) And his example will go a great way towards procuring all due respect to ecclesiastical judicatories.

4. Instead of laying snares in the church's way to turn aside from her profession, a piece of king-craft, for which all the *Stuarts*, particularly James VI., were notoriously famous; it is competent unto him to excite and animate her to due steadfastness therein. It is competent unto all Christians to do so. The *Colossian* believers are bid to say to *Archipus*,—Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. (Col. iv : 17.) And the Supreme Magistrate's saying so may be of no small weight.

Now, all that has been said on this subject, is abundantly consistent with liberty of conscience, whether as to an established church, or dissenters from it. It leaves the church which the magistrate countenances in full possession of all ecclesiastic jurisdiction, and dissenters in full possession of all their natural rights. At the same time, I flatter myself, that under the above or parallel particulars, all that is said in the Confession on the head of the magistrate's power about religion, may be very well comprehended.

However, if the Confession must be charged with attributing too much authority to the magistrate in religious matters, this ought not to be imputed to *Seceders*, as any part of their peculiar principles; nay, it ought not to be imputed to them at all.

It ought not to be imputed to *Seceders*, as any way peculiar to them. All who adhere to the Westminster Confession, particularly the established church of Scotland, nay, all the Protestant churches, each of whose Confession is as liberal of authority to the magistrate in this matter, as the Westminster Confession can well be construed to be. All these, it is plain, must be equally culpable with *Seceders* in the matter, if there were any blameableness in it. It is hoped, none will take the advantage of *Seceders* being more staunchly attached to the Confession, than some

others, to charge them with Erastian or persecuting principles; while they clear other professed adherers to it of the unworthy charge.

Nay, even supposing, though not granting, that the Confession attributes a deal too much power to the magistrate in religion; this ought not to be imputed to Seceders at all. They have given the most explicit declaration of their understanding and maintaining the Confession, in such a sense as is most opposite to all Erastianism or persecution for conscience sake; in such a sense as leaves no room for any encroachment on the peculiar jurisdiction of the church, or the consciences of dissenters. I don't mean to charge other adherers to the Confession with such hateful principles; but none of their fellow adherers to it have given such express declarations against them as the hated *Anti-burger* Seceders have done. While no other can be construed to adhere to the Confession any otherwise than as it came from the Westminster Assembly, and was ratified by the revolution parliament. Seceders avouch their adherence to it only as it was received by the church of Scotland in the Act above mentioned. According to the passage quoted in the beginning of this letter, from the Associate Presbytery's *Declaration and Defence of their Principles about the present Civil Government*, subjoined to their *Answers to Mr. Nairn*, there is no room left for the magistrate's intermeddling with any thing further than as it is immediately and directly connected with the public weal.

There is another passage in the said *Declaration and Defence*, which deserves peculiar notice. In page 46, the Presbytery declare as follows:

"As it was once a peculiar duty of the *Jewish* nation, so it is peculiarly incumbent upon every civil state whereinto Christianity is introduced, to study and bring to pass—that civil government among them, in all the appertinances of its constitution and administration, run in an agreeableness to the *word of God*; be subservient unto the spiritual kingdom of *Jesus Christ*, and to the interests of the true religion and reformation of the Church: As otherwise they cannot truly prosper in their civil concerns, nor be enriched by the blessings of the gospel.

"This duty, so incumbent upon the civil state, doth generally fall under these two heads: *First*, The whole people, adjoining themselves to the true Church, should approve themselves to be true members thereof; by serious, several, and mutual endeavors to promote the true religion and reformation of the Church—privately, publicly and universally, in their several places and callings. *Secondly*, This people, considered in their conjunct and *politic* capacity (as thus only the matter is competent unto them) should, by their deed of civil constitution, provide—that their Magistrates be obliged to concur in the same true religion and reformation; and to rule them by laws no way prejudicial, but serviceable thereunto; as, moreover, they ought to obey, encourage and support their magistrates in that way; and effectually to endeavor their information and reformation, where deficient or corrupt."

In this declaration of the people's duty in the setting of magistrates over them, there is a plain intimation of the magistrate's duty, in respect of all the furtherance of religion that is ordinarily competent to him. As the Presbytery are here giving a plain and honest declaration of the matter, in opposition to the extremes of those of the Anti-government persuasion, it manifestly amounts to a general declaration of the whole duty of the king; it may safely be viewed, as the whole sense of the debated paragraph of the Confession, as the same is understood and held forth by the Associate judicatories. And it is manifestly such as every body must own to be quite clear of Erastianism or persecution for conscience sake.

There is moreover, a passage in the *solemn warning* emitted by the

Associate Synod in 1758, which must not be omitted, as containing a plain vindication of Seceders from the odious charge of intolerant principles. When testifying against the toleration granted in 1712, they express themselves thus: "An almost boundless toleration was granted; such a toleration as gives countenance and encouragement to errors and corruptions, with an hindrance of ecclesiastical discipline." Such only is the toleration which is here condemned; but not such a one as only lies in affording common protection to men, and exempting them from civil pains, when the civil peace is not disturbed nor endangered.* What toleration the Synod here testify against, is industriously explained by them, so as not to find the least fault with the maintenance of liberty of conscience inviolable. The Associate Presbytery in the *Judicial Act and Testimony*, had expressed themselves in much the same manner. When speaking of the above toleration in 1712, they say—"Tolerations of this kind are contrary to the word;" hereby plainly enough insinuating, that there is a toleration of a *certain kind*, which is not contrary to the word of God. In both, the unlawfulness of a *positive* toleration is expressed; while the lawfulness of a *negative* toleration is plainly supposed, such namely, as was just now explained.

I cannot therefore conclude this head, without expressing great surprise, that any should be stumbled at the Synod's principles on the subject, through the flood of abuse which has of late years been poured out on them, as if their principles would lead them, provided only they had the civil magistrate on their side, to apply to him, for compelling all within his dominions, under severe penalties, to make profession of the same principles with them. They have given no occasion for the malignant calumny. Nay, instead thereof, they have given such evidence as providence called unto, of an absolutely contrary judgment. Here I shall take notice of two passages from the *solemn warning*, emitted by the Associate Synod in the year 1758. It page 32, 33 they say, "The government and disciples thereof [of the church] are no wise calculated for encroaching upon the proper rights or dignities of the civil sovereign; they extend not unto any controlling of public administrations, or private liberties, in the civil state; they are versant only about the consciences of men, and their spiritual concerns; they include no secular encouragements or compulsions; and whatever has, at any time, been pretended or attempted otherwise, should not be ascribed to the institutions of Christ, but to the mistakes or corruptions of men." And in page 35 they purposely describe that toleration which they condemn, viz: "Such a toleration as gives countenance and encouragement to errors and corruptions, with an hindrance of ecclesiastical discipline." Such is the toleration only which they bear testimony against. Consequently, such a one as only lies in affording common protection to men, and exempting them from civil pains, when the civil peace is not disturbed or endangered, is not disallowed of by them. It is a great shame therefore for Seceders to be terrified out of their principles, by the mere dint of what only a very little consideration would make them see to be mere calumny. For some time past, we have been exposed to uncommon reproach this way; and why not! Our great Lord and Master suffered reproach of the same sort; the Jews would have it reason or none, that he aimed at setting up himself as the head of an earthly kingdom; nay, it was on the footing of this very calumny, that they got him condemned to die. (John xix: 12, 13.) Wherefore the apostle's exhortation to the *Hebrews* is peculiarly applicable to *Seceders*: "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. xii: 3.)

* This is what I would call a negative toleration.

I was particularly struck with a calumny of this sort, in a late performance; as coming from a very unexpected quarter,—and set off with as great assurance, as if it had been the most undoubted and acknowledged truth. The author alledges, that “they (the Antiburghers) allow the civil magistrate a power to judge of doctrine, worship and discipline by the word of God; and to put a negative on the practices of church-members, and even on her judicial decisions, when they respectively depart from that word.” And for proof of their holding this Erastian tenet, he refers his readers to the Westminster Confession, Chapter 23. Sec. 3. Now, you observe, his proof must be null, unless the above tenet be implied in the Confession. In this case, one would think, that either he must allow of the Erastian tenet, himself, or disallow of the Confession. Nay, but neither of the two is the case. He would take it excessively ill, to be charged with either. Not the last, for he is a *Burgher* minister; not the first, for he frequently takes the opportunity to disclaim it. It is only a random stroke of calumny against those *hated Antiburghers*.—But is it not surprising he did not advert, that his readers would at once find out the cheat, by considering, that if our adherence to the Confession, imported an acknowledgement of such a principle, his adherence to it could imply no less. Such an instance therefore of invidious, but ill laid, slander, I never before met with in any author. (See what is called *An impartial survey* by *Archibald Hall*, p. 17.) If, however, I mistake Mr. Hall, in thinking him less Erastian than he is; I am sure I do not mistake when I say, that the *Associate Synod* absolutely disclaim any such principle, as any way compatible with the Confession; while they bear testimony against the following positions, as contrary both to the Confession and Scriptures,—viz: “That the office-bearers of the church, in their spiritual and ecclesiastical functions and administrations, are subordinate unto the civil magistrate; and that the civil magistrate may emit such constitutions, acts and orders, concerning the administration of the external government of the church, and concerning all ecclesiastical meetings, and matters to be proposed and determined therein, as he in his wisdom shall think fit.” (See *Act, Declaration and Testimony*, pp. 97, 98.) I had not taken any notice of this cavil, if it had not been to cast further light on the sense in which we understand and maintain the Confession.

And I hope, by this time, my friends are fully satisfied with the sense in which, we hold by it,—as nowise favorable to Erastianism, or persecution for conscience sake.

So I shall proceed, to the second part of the difficulty proposed. You'll perhaps say, the chief reason why *Seceders*, are charged with persecuting principles, is, the approbation which they have given, in the judicial act and testimony, of the covenanting period, between 1638 and 1650. However, you will observe, that if the *Antiburghers* are faulty in this matter, their *Burgher* brethren are equally so; while, so far as I know, they have not yet pretended to find fault with the approbation which the Testimony gives of that period. But while arrows of reproach are especially shot against Antiburghers, it is no contemptible evidence, that the Lord's standard is among them. Of this only by the way.

In answer to the difficulty, I would observe, that the laws of the covenanting period are of three sorts. 1. Such as gave security to a covenanted reformation,—making it warrantable and legal to make a free and open profession thereof; declaring that all might do so, under the protection and countenance of government. 2. Such as excluded from places of power and trust, those who were disaffected to the established government of church and state: and were known to be plotting to in-

introduce, or force arbitrary government into both. 3. Such as imposed a compliance with a covenanted reformation, under civil pains and punishments. The Acts of Parliament abolishing prelacy and establishing presbytery; viz. "Act anent the ratification of acts of the Assembly, at Edinburgh, June 11, 1640;" and "Act rescissory, at Edinburgh, June 11, 1640;" As also, "Act approving and establishing the directory for public worship, at Edinburgh, Feb. 6, 1645;" and "Act anent the Catechisms, Confession of Faith, and ratification thereof, at Edinburgh, Feb. 7, 1649;" and "Act abolishing the patronages of Kirks, at Edinburgh, March 9, 1649:" These acts, I say, were entirely of the first sort,—without any mention whatsoever, of civil pains and punishments; so that, whatever reference be made to them, or approbation given of them, in the Testimony,—there is not the least shadow of reason on that account, for charging it with persecuting principles, or the approbation of any thing inconsistent with due liberty of conscience: and they are manifestly chief parts of the security given to religion in that period. Some may, perhaps, wonder to hear of laws in favor of religion, or for the security thereof. But why should people be surprised to hear of laws for the protection of property, against thieves and robbers? The time is coming it is hoped, when religion will stand in no need of such a defence. (See Isaiah xi. 6—9. lxx. 25.) But in the mean time, we must accommodate ourselves to the times as we have them: and provide against the perils of them accordingly.

The "Act of classes for purging the judicatories and other places of public trust, at Edinburgh, June, 23, 1649;" and "Act for keeping judicatories and places of trust, free of corruption, Edinburgh, Feb. 17, 1649;" as also, "Act for purging the army, June 21, 1649;" which the Testimony takes notice of with approbation:—Nay, and even "Act anent securing the Covenant, religion, and peace of the kingdom, at Edinburgh, Feb. 7, 1649;" excluding Charles 2d, from the actual exercise of his royal authority, till he should give security to covenanted Reformation: These acts, I say, are entirely of the second sort; and are justifiable on the principles laid down in the explication of that article of the acknowledgement of sins respecting the public resolution, to which I refer.

There were, indeed, some acts of Parliament in that period, partly at least of the third sort,—imposing a compliance with a covenanted Reformation under civil penalties. Thus, our solemn covenants, the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England Ireland, were enjoined in Scotland, under all civil pains. And I don't know where any scruple on this head, can lie, except it be as to our solemn Covenants; for as to one or two other acts of this sort, no manner of notice is taken of them, no kind of reference is made to them; no sort of approbation is given of them, in the Testimony, or any act or deed emitted by the *Associate Presbytery* or *Synod*; so that however faulty, Erastian or arbitrary they may be supposed to be; we have really no manner of concern with them; though, what I am just now going to suggest, with reference to the Parliament's enforcing our solemn Covenants with all civil pains, will tend, at least, to alleviate their other acts of this sort. Meanwhile, if any should ask, why we don't bear testimony against the mismanagements of that period,—while we bear a very particular testimony against the evils of the several periods since that time; the answer is easy, and short: Both church and state in that period were in a commendable progress towards further and further degrees of reformation; so our proper duty, with reference thereunto, is, to bear testimony unto the good things of it, and to imitate them—while both church and state, in the several periods since that time, have been for most part, in a culpable progress towards further and

further degrees of deformation, without ever returning to the ancient Reformation; and so our proper duty, with reference hereunto, is, to bear testimony against the evils thereof, and to avoid them. The only remaining scruple then, I say, must be about the civil pains, with which, our covenants were enforced. But here it is to be observed,—

1. That part of the matter of our covenants, was fit enough for being enjoined by the Parliament, under civil pains and punishments. In so far as they contained an oath of allegiance to the king, or were a swearing to protect and defend one another in the free and peaceable enjoyment of their civil and religious privileges, they were unquestionably just such as ought to have been so enjoined: And a firm union among themselves, in a steady and vigorous defence of these privileges, against those who plotted and fought to deprive them of them, was one chief part of our solemn covenants, particularly of the Solemn League: At the same time, that it was highly necessary that our covenants, particularly the Solemn League, should contain an oath of mutual defence, as being the especial duty of those times; while all their privileges were at stake; it become them, as ever they would quit themselves like men, to unite together in a vigorous defence of them. Now, you'll remember, that what we maintain, is, "That our covenants, [in a religious view] could not be warrantably enforced by civil pains or punishments."

2. That their circumstances were very singular and extraordinary. Their times differed widely from ours. In our times, the friends of civil and religious liberty differ widely about the religious matter sworn unto in our solemn covenants: while, if they were agreed about it, by being the friends of liberty, they could not have any scruple of conscience about swearing to defend one another in the public profession thereof; whereas while they are not agreed about it, however lawful the defence of religious liberty, in the general, be judged by them; they could not be required to swear what of our solemn covenants they cannot, in judgment, agree to, under civil pains and penalties, without manifest imposition on their consciences. In the covenanting period, the case was remarkably otherwise. Abstracting from a few papists, who were the avowed enemies of both church and state; the enemies of civil and religious liberty had no scruple with any part of the matter of our Covenants, further than, they were contrary unto the arbitrary, and tyranical schemes of government, which they were contriving to have obtruded, respectively, on church and state, they had no objection to our covenants, but in so far as they were inconsistent with arbitrary government in the State, and Prelacy, and ceremonies in the Church,—which they wanted to force upon Scotland at that time. As an evidence hereof,—all of them were ready to swear the National Covenant itself; nay, Charles 1st. positively enjoined a swearing thereof: only they excepted against the bond wherein it was sworn by the Covenanters,—the same being an application thereof against the foresaid evils then attempted to be introduced. The like observation might be made, concerning the Solemn League, at least, in Scotland, of which the question now only is. In this case, a requiring of all, to swear the covenants was no otherwise an imposition on conscience, than a restraint upon them, not to impose on the consciences of others was so: As to any thing that they scrupled at,—it amounted to no more than that they should not impose upon their fellow subjects; and where was the harm of obliging them, under civil pains, to swear to abstain from a thing absolutely inconsistent with all liberty? It is further to be observed here, that the act of the Parliament of Scotland, injoining all to swear the covenants under all civil pains, at most, was only a law *in terrorem*, while it was never put in execution, further than to exclude the refusers from places of power and trust. Nay, an exclusion

from places of power and trust, was perhaps, all the meaning of the penalty in the sense of the Scots parliament. I don't pretend to know what may be the import of the phrase (all civil pains) in the law. But that they meant no more, but the incapacitating of the refusers to impose upon others, is pretty evident from the act itself; that very act which ordained the national covenant, as explained by the Assembly 1638, to be subscribed by all his majesty's subjects, of what rank and quality soever, under all civil pains, viz. "Act anent the ratification of the covenant, and of the Assembly's supplication; act of council, and act of the Assembly concerning the covenant; at Edinburgh, June 11, 1640." For when it comes forward to require the said covenant to be sworn, particularly by all the members of Parliament, it is under no higher a penalty, than the refusers having no place, nor voice in Parliament. Now, to have enjoined the swearing of our covenants under all civil pains in this sense, was no imposition upon conscience, as is proved in the explication of that article of the acknowledgement of sins respecting the public resolutions; which you'll please to read along with this.

3. In so far as the civil pains under which a swearing of our covenants was enjoined, bear any other or further sense, than that which was just now represented; the *Secession Testimony* is nowise concerned in it. As a manifest evidence hereof, and to pervert all misconstruction in the matter; neither the *Testimony* nor any other paper emitted by the *Associate Presbytery* or *Synod*, take any manner of notice of the civil pains with which our covenants were enforced. In this case, as our declared principles are in manifest contradiction to all compulsion in matters of mere religion, to represent us as favorers thereof, is grossly to abuse us. By this time, I hope, my friends are of the same mind; and if my trouble in writing the preceeding pages have this effect, I shall reckon myself exceedingly well rewarded. I am, dear friends, your servant in the service of Christ.

JAMES MORRISON.

Norham, Oct. 4, 1773.

P. S. There is only one thing further, that I would have my friends seriously to consider; namely, that they had need to be on their guard against every thing that is calculated to shake them, as to stedfastness in their profession. It is their duty and a mean of stability, to examine their principles by the word of God, in order to have a more and more distinct understanding of them; and so in order, to more and more establishment in them. But it is a great shame to be stumbled, merely by the dint of reproach and abuse. It is an evidence of great weakness for people to suffer themselves to be clamored out of their principles by the calumnies of those who lie in weight to deceive. Nay, it is not a sufficient reason for being shaken about our profession, that we cannot answer every difficulty that may be started against it. The proper way is, to endeavor to be well established in the truth of what we profess, on the evidence of scripture; and then, to maintain our ground against all opposition. The Apostle exhorts us not to be soon shaken in mind, (2 Thess. ii. 2.) "And blessed is he," says our Lord, "whosoever shall not be offended in me. (Matt. xi. 6.)"

ART. III. Watt's Preface to the Psalms.

(Concluded from page 42.)

We come now to the 4th reason why we should throw away many of the songs of Zion from our praises. We give his words, "*Many of them are foreign to the state of the New Testament.*" Now all that is neces-

sary to shew that the Doctor could get no prop here, is to understand the true difference between the *new* and *old* state of the church. This difference, in truth, is just the difference between a *beginner* and an adept in learning. It is not for want of books that the beginner does not start a proficient, but for want of understanding his books. Just so with the Jew; to him was committed the oracles of God. (Rom. iii: 3.) Elsewhere called the *lively* oracles. See Isaiah, 60th Chap. 3d verse, where the Gentile, in the day of God's mercy to him, is spoken of not as coming to any *new* light, or *contrary* command. No, no; but to the Jew's light. It was by the Old Testament scriptures that Christ confirmed all his doctrine, saying, *as it is written*, Christ created no *new* light, in the 24th Chap. of Luke, 44th verse; but the subsequent verse shews that he opened their understandings to the *old* light. Query.—Is there any thing more necessary in order to a rich feast, in singing the 69th Psalm, than to have the yoke taken from off our jaws? Faith may act on every word of it, as they are all divine, but not on one word of human songs.

The fifth reason given for changing the *Lord's songs* for man's, is, that there are "*many* of them widely different from the present circumstances of Christians." Take in connection with this, where in the same section he is speaking of the unsuitableness of divine songs for New Testament worshippers: "Our consciences are affrighted lest we should speak a falsehood to God." But are these assertions true? If so, then a portion of the scripture is of *private interpretation*, and ended with those to whom it was originally given. But in contradiction of this, *it is written*, (Peter ii: 20.) "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." But are we any more likely to speak a falsehood in the use of the Divine Psalms than they were? The 69th Psalm, to which the Doctor has referred as a reason of turning them out of doors *as songs for present use*, contains, as we have seen, these words: "They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink;" words without literal application to any but Christ on the cross, who had not then, nor for many centuries after it was penned, suffered. The same objection lies to the 18th verse of the 68th Psalm, that celebrates the ascension of Christ long before it took place—Thou hast ascended, &c. as also the 22d Psalm, 1st verse, which has Christ's prayer on the cross, and 18th verse: "They parted my garments among them, and cast lots for my vesture." I could multiply such scriptures upon my page, but let these suffice to prove that this objection of the Doctor's to the use of these songs, because of change of circumstances lies as strong against the Jew as against us, and as strongly condemns the Divine songs in the mouth of the *Old* Testament saint, as in that of the *New*. He might with more propriety keep back, lest he should *speak a falsehood* to God in singing those parts referred to, and *many* others, than we who live after their accomplishment. Yet if he had altered one word of them, he would have fared as Nadab and Abihu did. But, objector, would you rather go to the 109th Psalm to sustain yourself? But we have seen that the Jew had as little latitude to hate his enemies as we have; so that the objection you raise to this Psalm, on the ground of imprecation, excluded it from the lips of the Jew with as much reason as from ours. And it is well worthy of notice, that the Holy Spirit refers to it as well as to the 69th Psalm, as divinely inspired. (See Acts i: 20.) For *it is written* in the book of Psalms, let his habitation be desolate, &c., containing a portion of what is called the most invective part of the Psalms.

The Doctor and his adherents may disown these Psalms, and opprobiously call them *David's cursing* psalms; but God by this quotation, has owned them and welcomed them into the New Testament, and if they be cursing Psalms they contain God's curses, (see 20th verse, 109th Psalm,)

from David? no, no, *from God*. "Let this be the reward of mine enemies from the Lord." These very Psalms are a portion of those from which he was denominated the sweet Psalmist of Israel. But perhaps objectors under this head, would rather go to some of the typical things to sustain themselves; then let us go. Perhaps you are displeased with so much being said about the *harp*; let us apply to what is *written*. See Rev. 14 and 2, where there is sung one of the new songs referred to by the Doctor, and you will find that they are not *affrighted* at the *harp*. "And I heard the voices of *harpers*, *harping* with their *harps*." And 15th Chap. 2d verse, where they are employed in the same way, having the harps of God (not of Doctor Watts) in their hands. Query.—Were they singing human songs, or the songs of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb? The same Lamb which, in scripture sense, was slain from the foundation of the world. But are you tired of the Old Testament songs, because they say so much about beasts? Then see the 4th Chap. of Rev. 6—8 verses, where you will be sickened at a New Testament singing company, where there is mention made of four kinds of *monstrous* beasts. But do you claim that your songs should be stripped of typical things entirely? Then how will you do with this Chapter and the next, where God's New Testament people, when assembled in praise, have the twenty-four elders, the beasts, tribe of Judah, David, and our Lord, in his typical name, the Lamb, in reference to the Pascal Lamb, having seven horns and seven eyes? And when in the 12th verse of the 5th Chap. of Rev. the song of the saints was raised, they began it in the ascription of praise to him, they used his typical name, Lamb. We can now look more clearly at Christ through the types and shadows, than the Jew could. The *New Testament* is just a Divine Sermon, delivered on the *Old*. I need not argue this, read your Bible and you will see the truth of what I say.

I might pass through all the book of Psalms, and show that on the Doctor's principle, under the *difference of circumstances*, no system of songs could be formed to suit at all; and the Doctor, aware of this, makes provision for it in the fifth section of his preface, and gives liberty to all whom it may concern, to turn him into any shape so as to suit, for he was determined to please. To be sure, he there tells us he has used words of an *extensive* sense; but if his project of ambiguity should fail, he in a pinch of this kind, licenses the clerk, "should he meet with an unpleasing word, to substitute a better." And the Doctor's followers taking the hint, have actually *turned* the *Doctor* from a *Britain* into an *American*; thinking they might do so not only from his licence, but from the fact that he had *turned David into a Christian*. See a few of the many instances of this, in the copy referred to in my preface, 117th page, in the commencing Hymn of the 2d book, 5th and 6th verses; the original of these two verses reads thus:

Verse 5th. "This northern Isle, our native land,
"Lies safe in the Almighty's hand;
"Our foes of victory dream in vain,
"And wear the captivating chain."

In turning the Doctor into an *American*, the next verse is left out, although as it was *all British*; it lies before me in these words:

"He builds and guards the British throne,
"And makes it gracious like his own:
"Makes our successive princes kind,
"And gives our dangers to the wind."

Query.—If the Doctor considered his licence necessary to warrant an alteration of his songs, how dare he venture to alter the songs of the most high God without leave or license? Let the adherents of Watts answer this.

The 3d Section contains the Doctor's plea of necessity, after his abuse of the Lord's Songs, with his method of quoting them, for doing what he has done by telling us that so good men had advised him to do; again by telling us that he meant no harm to the book of Psalms, and then reiterates his charges, and proceeds boldly to offer the *strange* fire.

The 4th section, with all that follow, contains an account of the **ST-PLANTER**.—And now I ask him, and his adherents on the threshold, for their warrant; and the Doctor aware of this, claims that he has got it in the revelations of John, in the various short patterns of *Christian* Psalmody described therein. (Query.—Are the inspired Psalms *Anti-Christian*?) I suppose he means the 5th Chapter, as he gives it on his title page. Now look at that Chapter, and see if it contains a warrant for him. Why no; It is as obnoxious to the Doctor's objections, as any Psalm in the 150, of the book of Psalms; for in it we find the beasts, Elders, harps and our Lord called a lamb, beyond all doubt, as we have seen, in reference to the Pascal Lamb having seven horns and seven eyes. Can any thing be more Jewish than this? I ask again for his warrant, for so the *Lamb* has taught us, and so he moved with, *as it is written*, he always sent it before to open the way, or what was equivalent, his authority, and I challenge all christendom to produce an example in scripture, of human composure, being used in songs to God. And the Doctor does not pretend to any Divine warrant, but such as is drawn from example. He tells us in this section, that he has *avoided* the more obscure points of *Christianity*, in order to please. This he gives as a good character to his Hymns; but it is a sufficient reason for their condemnation. (See Isaiah xliii: 9, 10.) In the 9th verse you have the devil's witnesses, and in the 10th, Christ's. We should preserve our witnessing character in singing, as well as in all other duties.

Now it has always been the leading distinction between true and false witnesses, that the true would keep by the plain truth without inquiring who was pleased or displeased. Whereas the false, if he did not actually state falsehoods, would strive to be ambiguous, (or, in the Doctor's language,) "use words of an extensive sense," in order to please. Christ's witnesses are always perjured in his sight, when they avoid the truth to please any man or set of men. Now, as there is no warrant adduced, nor can be, either from example or precept, drawn from *as it is written*, Let us look a moment at the awful effects of doing that in sacred things which has no divine warrant. (See Exodus xx. 25.) "If thou lift up thy *tool* upon it, thou hast polluted it." It was always wicked to make either an *imitation* of God or his word, "for unto what will ye liken either him or his word, and our God is a jealous God, and no where is his jealousy hotter than round his altar of worship." See Lev. x: 1, where Nadab and Abihu died for offering strange fire (or fire without an *as it is written*,) before the Lord. See 2 Samuel, vi: 7. where Uzzah died for putting to his hand, without an, *as it is written*. See 2 Samuel, 24th Chap. where David, because of his numbering the people without an *as it is written*, lost seventy thousand men. And it always was wicked to introduce any thing in the way of removing any thing of God's from any place he has set it, without an *as it is written*. No difference though what we would put in its place, may seem in human wisdom, far superior to that which we remove; "for the foolishness of God is wiser than men." See 16th Chap. of 2 Kings, 10th verse, &c. where Urijah the priest, and king Ahaz, in the true spirit of the Doctor, removed the *altar of the Lord* for one they deemed to be of a *superior* kind. But what did the *truly pious* young Josiah the king do with it when he was purifying the house of God? (See 2 Kings xxiii: 12.) He beat it down, and break it, and cast it into the brook Cedron, and let the Hymns of Watts read their doom in

the destruction of that altar, that assumed the place of God's. When the Lord shall visit Zion in mercy, he will sweep them out with the *besom of destruction*, with the other filth of Jerusalem, that has accumulated in an evil day of the church, when bad kings reigned.

The 5th section I have noticed.

The 6th contains a system of man-pleasing, as do all the rest. The 8th concedes that anti-human song-men, in the praises of God, sing translations of God's word, that which many of his followers deny.

In the 9th section, the Doctor confesses that fancy sometimes governed him and led him into errors. In his last note, he shews that this preface was written in contemplation of the imitations of the book of Psalms, which he says, in connection with his Hymns, are a *sufficient* provision for psalmody. By this word *sufficient*, he has excluded the divine songs altogether from their leading object, which was to be the songs of the church. Why did not the Doctor first try his hand upon creation? which God pronounced to be very good, and yet there are many hills upon the land, and waves in the sea, that increase the labour of the traveller. Now the same Spirit that moved upon the face of the waters, moved on the face of the divine songs, and there is no more possibility of improving the book of Psalms, than there is the face of the sea; they are both alike works of infinity.

In conclusion, I have only to ask the General Assembly Church to retrace their steps, and examine the reasons why human composure was introduced. The Doctor's preface contains the key that opened the door to human invention in the songs of worship in that church. Look at it again, and you will find that its motto is, *as it pleased man*, not *as it is written*, a dangerous key to be used about the house of God. I have many reasons to wish well to the General Assembly Church. I have relatives in her as near to me as my right arm. May God send her deliverance, for she is brought *very low*. Would to God she could see and understand the 13th and 14th verses of the 102d Psalm, which contains a revival of *true* religion, with the evidences of it in these words: "The time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come;" and then mentions the evidences of it being come, "for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof." *As it is written.*

Note.—As I can perceive of no way for the adherents to human composure in the praises of the church to bear off their reasons for its introduction, safe from ignorance or infidelity, but by denying that I have given a true copy; to cut off this retreat, I now pledge the truth of all the lovers of divine songs, that upon being called upon through the medium of the Monitor, I shall produce such evidence of the genuineness of the transcript, as would be taken as conclusive evidence by any court of justice on earth.

ART. IV. General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church.

Case of Professor McClelland.—The committee to whom was referred the sermon of Professor McClelland, made the following report, which was accepted and ordered to be printed for the use of the members.

The committee to whom was referred the Sermon of the Rev. Professor McClelland, respectfully report, that they have compared the said Sermon with the standards of the church, and present the following as the result of their investigation. They have arranged the several extracts under the following heads: *Of Depravity, Of Good Works, and Of Grace.*

OF DEPRAVITY.

Sermon, p. 7.—Assuming now that human nature is compounded in the manner described of various susceptibilities and propensities, each demanding its own appropriate gratification—I proceed to observe, that the due exercise of them all in their proper proportions and order, constitutes the perfection of our moral being. When the private affections are in their place, the social in theirs, the religious also in theirs, then man is that noble creature, at whose formation “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” In consequence, however, of the apostacy, a mournful revolution took place; for in departing from the author of his being, he lost the higher and nobler sensibilities of his bosom. That holy class of affections which could only be gratified by holding communion with the Father of spirits, became extinct, and in consequence he found his meat and drink in satisfying more ignoble cravings. This, my brethren, is what I call natural depravity. It is not the infusion of some mysterious, occult principle of positive hostility to moral rectitude, but simply the absence of that aptitude and disposition to become united with the great first fair and first good which was originally laid in man's constitution by the author of nature, and the exercise of which is essential to his perfection. It is true, the Holy Scriptures represent the carnal mind as enmity against God; but then let it be considered, that want of love,—where love is due,—may properly come under that denomination.

Page 3.—But why is it not enough to say, that in consequence of our progenitor's apostacy, man has lost those *habits of holiness* which disposed him to know and enjoy his God? Why necessary to deny him a little miserable pittance of his former riches?

The Bible is explicitly in favor of the doctrine that unregenerate man is not entirely divested of really valuable and praiseworthy qualities. Examining its page, we always find it representing the corruption introduced by sin to respect *God as the object*. Thus clearly intimating that the other instincts and propensities of his nature are able to perform their office with propriety. Hence the many encomiums on men professedly unregenerate; hence the certain kind of approbation with which their best actions are rewarded. (Here follow examples of illustration.)

Page 11.—But let me not be misunderstood. Let me not be charged with asserting that there is any thing in human nature deserving the name of *holiness*. We recognise the old distinction between holiness and virtue, as both true and important. The former is love to God, the want of which nothing can compensate; the latter is the exercise of other praiseworthy affections which it is practicable for every man to exercise, and in the exercise of which, we fulfil *one*, though not the *great* purpose of our being.

Page 13.—After all, however, it is to be strenuously contended, that even the best actions of the unregenerate are accompanied with sin. But if the view which we have taken be correct, the sin in such cases is of a peculiar kind, and exceedingly different from what is generally meant by the phrase *positive wickedness*: it is, in a word, *sin of defect*. By refusing to exercise the religious affections—loving God with all his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, he forfeits every claim to the divine favor and the rewards of holiness. He is a sinner in all that he does, because in all that he does he comes short of the glory of God. But must we therefore conclude that no legitimacy can be attached to the exercise of those innocent principles that have survived the wreck of the apostacy?

Page 15.—We may be told that we deny the total corruption of human nature. In reply, it need only be observed, that if by the phrase “total corruption” is meant that there is nothing in human nature but what is vile and loathsome—that utter perversion has seized on all its powers and affections, no such doctrine is contained in the sacred scriptures.

Confession, Sec. 14, p. 21.—We believe that God created man, &c. . . . but being in honor, he understood it not, neither knew his excellency, but wilfully subjected himself to sin, and consequently to death and the curse, giving ear to the words of the devil. For the commandment of life which he had received, he transgressed, and by sin separated himself from God, who was his true life, having corrupted his whole nature; whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death. And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he hath lost all his excellent gifts which he had received from God, and only retained a few remains thereof, which, however, are sufficient to leave man without excuse; for all the light which was in us is changed into darkness, as the Scriptures teach us, saying: “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;” where John calleth men darkness. Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave to sin; and has nothing of himself unless it is given to him from heaven.

Canons, 3d and 4th heads of doctrine, p. 153, Art. 1.—Man was originally formed after the image of God, his understanding was adorned with a true and saving know-

ledge of his Creator, and of spiritual things; his heart and will were upright; all his affections were pure, and the whole man was holy; but revolting from God by the instigation of the devil, and abusing the freedom of his own will, he forfeited these excellent gifts, and on the contrary entailed on himself blindness of mind, horrible darkness, vanity and perverseness of judgment, became wicked, rebellious and obdurate in heart and will, and impure in his affections.

Page 159, Art. 4.—There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and discovers some regard for virtue, good order in society, and for maintaining an orderly external deportment. But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God, and to true conversion, that he is incapable of using it aright, even in things natural and civil. Nay, further; this light, such as it is, man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and holds it in unrighteousness, by doing which, he becomes inexcusable before God.

Heid. Cat. 2d Lord's day, p. 41. Qu. 5.—Canst thou keep all these things [all things contained in the law] perfectly?

In no wise. For I am prone by nature to hate God and my neighbor.

3d Lord's day, Qu. 3.—Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness? Indeed we are, except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God.

GOOD WORKS.

Ser. p. 3.—Examining its pages, (the Bible,) we always find it representing the corruption introduced by sin to respect *God as the object*. Thus clearly intimating that the other instincts and propensions of his nature are able to perform their office with propriety. Hence the many encomiums on men confessedly unregenerate. Hence the certain kind of approbation with which their best actions are rewarded. Ahab humbled himself in dust and ashes; and God said to Elijah, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself? I will not bring my wrath upon his house in his days. Now certainly none will allege that Ahab's repentance proceeded from renewed principles; yet it was so esteemed by God as to bring down the most desirable of temporal blessings. In like manner, the idolatrous Jehoshaphat turned not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam. Let it not be said, that these testimonies of approbation relate only to the outward conduct. This only increases the difficulty. Will the Great Being approve mere external conformity to the precepts of his law? Then the Searcher of hearts must be the friend and rewarder of hypocrisy; and what becomes of those tremendous threatenings denounced on his ancient people because they approached him with their lips, while their hearts were far from him? Plainly, therefore, these historical facts bear testimony to certain internal virtues and good dispositions in the persons spoken of. Nor is it difficult to point them out. Both Ahab and Jehoshaphat entertained a becoming sense of the divine power and justice—they trembled at the thought of suffering the consequences of their crimes—above all they seem to have been actuated by an ardent patriotism and love of country, which induced them to humble themselves before God for its preservation. Now these sensibilities were *his own planting* in their bosoms; and as the *God of nature*, he could not but look with a degree of complacency on the work of his own hands.

Page 12.—Let the unsophisticated feelings of our hearts decide the question,—whether in exercising gratitude to a benefactor—in stretching out the warm hand of charity to a fellow-creature whom affliction has laid low; in stepping forward to the defence of injured innocence, in sacrificing brilliant prospects of safe acquisition to an honest respect for the rights of others, we do not experience the delightful emotion of conscious rectitude. It differs, indeed, from the heavenly satisfaction of a conscience at peace with God in degree; and the difference is so great, that I do not wonder at the unwillingness of those who have tasted the latter, to acknowledge any resemblance. The resemblance, however, exists, and the moral sentiment connected with every exercise of virtuous sensibility, may claim affinity with the pure joys of the upper temple.

Page 16.—Man is *corrupt*—because, though possessing many noble features of character, he comes into the world destitute of the most noble and excellent of all—love to the Being who made him. “God is not in all his thoughts.” He is *totally* corrupt; as this essential defect accompanies all his actions, rendering his best services light and empty in the eye of infinite purity. Whatever he does is sinful—because when weighed in the balance, it is found wanting.

Page 18.—We conclude at present, with addressing a class of hearers, whom we have always considered as on some accounts the most interesting in our religious assemblies—those who distinguish themselves for their high and elevated morality, and yet give us no reason to believe that they have experienced the great change which is

essential to a well-founded Gospel hope. My dear friends, the sentiments which I have been expressing throughout my discourse, and which are the sentiments of my heart, give a sufficient pledge that I am not going to employ the language of abuse. . . . Press on, my brother, in your virtuous career, continue to adorn your station, by firm, unbending integrity—clothe the naked—feed the hungry—wipe the tear from the cheek of the mourner, and enjoy the delightful luxury of contemplating the happiness your benevolence has caused. In all this you do well, and prove that you are a man—that exalted being whom God fashioned in his own likeness, and who, though fallen, retains a portion of his image still. But suffer a word of admonition from one perfectly disposed to render justice to your excellencies. Is their not one thing which you lack—and that more important than all the rest? Do you love him supremely?

Here is your sin. You do the less and neglect the *greater*. You are honest, you are generous, you are grateful, you are all that can be wished in the social relations—but of the rock that begat you, you are unmindful.

ON GRACE.

Canons, 1st head, Art. 8 p. 151.—There are not various decrees of election, but one and the same decree respecting all those who shall be saved, both under the Old and New Testament: since the Scripture declares the good pleasure, purpose, and counsel of the divine will to be one, according to which he hath chosen us from eternity both to grace and to glory—to salvation and the way of salvation, which he hath ordained that we should walk therein.

Art. 9.—This election (namely to grace) was not founded upon foreseen faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition in man as the prerequisite, cause, or condition on which it depended; but men are chosen to faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, &c.; therefore election is the fountain of every saving good.

3d and 4th heads, Art. 3, p. 150.—Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, incapable of any saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto; and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit they are neither able nor willing to return to God—to reform the depravity of their nature, nor to dispose themselves to reformation.

Ser. p. 32.—I think it must be acknowledged, that the doctrine which we have been advocating is absolutely necessary to a complete statement of the sin, and inexcusableness of unbelief. We are authorised by it to assert—that though the moral agent cannot regenerate himself, he may procure the grace of regeneration.

Page 33.—Such also, is the very language that shall be addressed to the impenitent Gospel hearer. He will be distinctly told, that though the Spirit alone could work in him, to will, and to do, yet this Spirit was as freely offered him as atonement, pardon, and every other covenant blessing, that by acting out his natural powers on the system of divinely appointed means, he would have as firmly secured his salvation, as if it had depended on his own unassisted energies.

The Committee conceive that these extracts from the Sermon of Professor M'Clelland do not seem to harmonize with the extracts from the Standards of the church, and therefore recommend that the synod afford to Professor M'Clelland the opportunity of appearing before them, to make such explanations as he may deem proper.

By order of the Committee.

JOHN LUDLOW, Chairman.

It was resolved that Prof. M. be requested, agreeably to the recommendation of the committee, to give the requisite explanations; also that he be furnished with a copy of the report, and inquired of when it will be convenient for him to make said explanations.

The professor being present, in answer to the inquiry replied, that he was at a loss, not having anticipated the course taken by the Synod. He expressed his sense of the courteousness of the report, and good feeling discovered towards him. He had expected impeachment, and the idea of a formal trial would embarrass him, and in that case, not being an extempore speaker, but accustomed to depend on his pen, he should have required time, and reference to books, &c.; but for a free conversation, a mere informal, extra judicial examination by question and answer, he was ready now, ready at any time; he regarded the Synod as now acting as a grand jury merely to see if there were grounds for indictment. He felt a strong conviction of the truth of the opinions maintained in his sermon, and that he should be able to explain them to the satisfaction of Synod. This was the first time he had heard the charges, the committee of the classis of New-Brunswick not having stated them to him.

It was resolved that Prof. M. be heard in explanation at half past 3 o'clock, P. M. on Monday.

Rev. O. EASTMAN, a secretary of the American Tract Society, made a statement of the condition and prospects of that important institution, and exhibited some stereo-

type plates for printing in Chinese characters. Drs. Brodhead and Ferris, and Messrs Mann, Varick, and Weist were appointed a committee to prepare a minute on the subject.

It was resolved, That the General Synod in proceeding to the consideration of the report of the committee in relation to Professor M'C's. sermon pursue the following order :

1. The Professor make such remarks in relation to the same as he may think proper.
2. That when the Professor has closed his remarks, he be requested to retire, and that the Synod proceed to deliberate and decide upon the same.

Adjourned till Monday morning 11 o'clock.

Monday morning, 11 o'clock, June 9.—The morning was chiefly spent on the report of the committee on drafts of forms.

Monday afternoon.—A motion was carried to reconsider the vote as to the order of proceeding in the case of Professor M'Clelland ; and the part requiring him to retire while the Synod deliberated and decided on his explanations was stricken out.

Professor M. said he stood before Synod under disadvantages, having but brief notice, and his remarks would therefore be diffuse and desultory. He believed he should be able to show that the opinions in his sermon were in accordance with the articles of the Synod of Dort.

He would premise that the object of his discourse had been misunderstood. To explain it, he reviewed his personal history. He had been settled for ten years as pastor in the Presbyterian church, when Hopkinsianism was in its prosperous days. He was in the minority and had ever since been opposed to that system ; he had been brought in frequent collisions with his brethren on the topics ; whether God is the agent in unholy volitions ; whether atonement was general or particular ; whether virtue was disinterested ; whether man was under a proper inability, or only under inability in a loose sense : how unregenerate men were to be treated, particularly whether they have power to exercise holy volitions. He early foresaw what is now called New-Havenism, the doctrine that man can regenerate his own heart—it was only the developement of that germ he had to contend with 10 or 12 years ago. Prof. M. declared his belief that man is wholly depraved, unable, of himself, to perform acts spiritually good, and needs to be regenerated by a physical operation on his very soul.—Yet sinners have natural power to use the means of grace, and should be exhorted to use them.

The sermon was intended to meet several errors of Hopkinsianism, from which New-Havenism has grown out. One objection is, that previous to regeneration, man is totally depraved, so that all his actions are sinful. How then, the objector asks, can you tell the sinner to pray ? Answer. The sinner is an active being. Treat him as active. He cannot regenerate himself ; but he can seek after God, and after holiness. Exhort him to do it.

But the objector replies, this seeking, while unregenerated, will be sin. How can you exhort him to sin ? Answer. Notwithstanding man is totally depraved and impotent to all that is truly and spiritually good, yet, since the fall, there are left in man, by the common grace of God, some qualities which are in a sense praiseworthy, but not holy. Such are the social and domestic affections, the desire of happiness, natural conscience, &c. On these, and on man by means of these, the truths of the gospel may operate ; and God may notice them with favor, as he does the young ravens when they cry. These are left in fallen man, partly that a state of human society may be possible—that earth may not be a hell ; but chiefly, that there might be something on which a remedial system, like the gospel, could act, so that men might be saved. They are left in man that there might be something in him to which the preacher of the gospel might address the motives of the gospel, and which could respond to that address. The sermon was intended to bring these to view, so as to defend the doctrine, that men are "dead in trespasses and sins," from these objections.

His object in writing the sermon, confined him to a one-sided view of the subject. A professor, in his lectures, must build his doctrines into a regular structure, exhibiting all in their true proportions and relations ; but in discussing an insulated doctrine, the preacher is forced to do otherwise, and hence, sometimes, the appearance of heresy. Preach on the unity of God, and one who knows nothing of you but what he learns from that sermon, may take you for a disbeliever in the Trinity. In the same manner, this sermon has been misunderstood.

As to the standards of the church, he had, in former years, been on the very verge of Arminianism, and even of Socinianism ; but he had come to the conclusion that Calvinism is indeed the truth of God ; and he regarded the standards of the church as a masterly exhibition of it. He spoke highly of the Westminster Catechism, but most highly of the decisions of the Synod of Dort. The only fault which he finds in the standards is merely a fault in the arrangement, in that they do not always distinguish between the natural and the moral government of God.

As to the doctrine of depravity—to his brethren, the standards seemed to represent man as utterly wicked in all particulars; while he seemed to represent depravity as a mere negation, and man as destitute of supreme love to God, but right in all other respects. Not so. His object was, not to explain depravity, but to confute Hopkinsianism. Dr. Hopkins maintains that God determines the unholy acts of man, as much as his holy acts; that sin is something positive, and must have a positive cause; that man cannot be the cause, for this would make his first sinful act the cause of itself; nor can Satan be the cause, for he has not creative power, and cannot alter the nature of what God has made; that, therefore, God must be the cause of man's sinful acts. Prof. M. found this argument easily answered. He says, sin is not a positive infusion, a something put into the soul. The privation of original righteousness, or of the love of God, is sufficient to account for all its phenomena. By the imputation of Adam's sin, the infant is under the curse of God's holy law, and God, as a righteous governor, ruling according to law, is bound to withdraw from him that grace, which, while it remains, guides the active powers of man aright; and human activity, thus left to itself, goes forth wrong; the affections being withdrawn from that superior good on which they should be fixed, fasten upon the inferior; and this is the formal essence of depravity. Man is said to be the enemy of God; and want of love, where love is due, is with propriety called enmity. It deserves this name the more, because it ripens into positive enmity. Man is prone to wickedness, in that he has no love to God; and when the commandment comes, forbidding him to commit the sins which he loves, then he hates God for giving those commands; and this will the more certainly and abundantly take place, because, though each man has not an existing inclination to all kinds of sin, yet each has, in his nature, a tendency to sin of every kind.

All this, Prof. M. maintained, is agreeable to the standards of the church. To prove this, he adduced numerous quotations from the divines of the synod of Dort, some of which included, with approbation, quotations from Augustine and others.—He also quoted from Charnock and Howe, and from Edwards on original sin.

As to the existence of praiseworthy qualities in the unregenerate—he denied that they perform good works—truly and spiritually good. Yet, the word good has different significations. The peas which he ate were good; so were the running of that horse, the recitation of that student, the giving of alms by that sailor, the self-sacrificing heroism of the patriot, the prayer of the martyr—each with its own kind of goodness. So the obedience of the regenerate is good—is holy. The actions of the unregenerate, sometimes, are in a sense praiseworthy, but they are not holy, or, as the old divines expressed it, truly and spiritually good. Yet they have an affinity to holiness. The child knows what it is to love his father; and, by this, he may be made to understand what it is to love God. The use of this doctrine is that sinners may be addressed with some hope of success, with some hope of exciting to activity those sparks of excellency which remain in them since the fall, such as the social affections, natural conscience, and the sense of the excellence of religion. I tell the sinner to go on in the exercise of these praiseworthy qualities, but that this will not save him. He must have the "one thing needful," or perish.

As to grace, and the connection between these praiseworthy qualities and regenerating grace, it may be that we differ. We agree, in opposition to the Hopkinsians, that means of regeneration are to be used. We agree in telling the sinner to use them. The means of grace are sufficient; not only the external, but the internal.—These last, the internal means, consist of the common operations of the Spirit of God, exciting to activity the seminal sparks of excellence which are left in man; for all that is praiseworthy in the unregenerate is from the Spirit of God that is in them.

If the sinner improves this common grace, leaving to God the time of his special work of regenerating grace, then the connection between this use of means and regeneration is the same as between effort and success in the common avocations of life. For success in this way the sinner is encouraged to hope, by the declarations concerning the goodness of God in the Scriptures.

This has induced an appearance of Pelagianism, inasmuch as, according to it, the sinner moves first in the matter of his salvation. But this difficulty applies to the doctrine itself, in which we all agree, that means of regeneration are to be used, and that sinners are to be told, "try to repent; try to believe; it is probable you will meet God." The sinner who is thus renewed may say, "I begun, I moved first."—This difficulty is as strong against the whole church, as against me. It is not true, however, that the sinner ever so uses the means of regeneration, as to lay God under any obligation to regenerate him.

The government of God is of two kinds, natural and moral. When urging sinners to the performance of their duty, the principles of the moral government of God should be preached, without regard to the doctrine of election, which belongs to his natural government. The consideration of the natural government of God was left out of the sermon on purpose, with motive prepense, or rather, benevolence prepense,

because they should always be considered separately. Otherwise, the mind of the sinner will be confused, and he will neglect obedience to the moral government of God, because he finds difficulties in respect to his natural government.

Prof. M. concluded by reading the following statement :

I believe that man is totally depraved, by which I mean that he comes into the world entirely destitute of holy affections. He is alienated from the life of God, averse from his service, and rebellious in all his feelings, thoughts and purposes, so that under no circumstances has he, while unregenerate, performed an act of spiritual service. His best deeds are sinful in the sight of God, as they not only come short of perfect conformity to the law, but are utterly destitute of the very principle of obedience. His most shining virtues are "dead works," and expose to eternal condemnation. Besides this, I hold that there is in him a proneness and bias to all the forms of positive wickedness, and that nothing but the hedge placed around him by the restraints of common grace preserve any individual from exhibiting in his character and habitual deportment the darkest tints of the description given by Paul in Rom. i. 29.

To guard, however, against the horrible imputation that we make God the author of moral evil, I join with all the orthodox in asserting that natural corruption, as to its origin and formal essence, does not consist in the infusion of any *positive sinful principle*, but hold, that the being deprived of original rectitude, viewed in connexion with man's natural activity, is amply sufficient to account for it. Averse from the true end of his being, he cannot but choose a false one. The inferior principles left to themselves become absolute masters of the heart ; the consequence of which is a state of awful disorder and confusion.

With respect to the question on which I am alleged to speak by far too doubtfully, whether inherent corruption is in itself and detached from its connexion with the imputation of Adam's first sin, properly blameworthy and deserving of eternal death, I think it is one which *never should be put*, as the Bible never views our moral disease in this state of insulation. When pressed to consider it, I am always deterred from answering in the affirmative, by this consideration ; that corruption being a tremendous calamity inflicted on the human race, it really appears very difficult to reconcile its existence with the divine justice, unless the subject was *previously* under a curse, on account of actual transgression. Were there not an imputation of Adam's guilt resting upon the infant, how can we vindicate the ways of God in sending it into the world destitute of those holy and heavenly influences with which our nature was originally favored and the want of which infallibly mark it out as a child of sin and sorrow, through the whole course of its future life ? Would it not be wrong in God to *create* such a being, and supposing it created, would he not do equally wrong in punishing it ? These are serious difficulties to those who deny imputation, but they do not seriously disturb me ; for I believe that inherent corruption is not the primary or proper ground of the curse, but a *part* of the curse itself, inflicted on the children of Adam, as "sinning in him and falling with him in his first transgression." To the 15th article of our confession I therefore fully subscribe, understanding the term *original sin* to include *imputed* guilt, as well as the corruption which proceeds from it ; "It is so vile and abominable in the sight of God, that it is sufficient to condemn all mankind."

I believe that while man has lost the image of God, there still remain within him sparks of a lower kind of excellence. He is gifted with various sensibilities, the actions performed under whose influence are *materially* good and amiable ; at the same time they can make no claim on the divine acceptance on account of the essential defect which accompanies them. Their value in a religious view only consists in this : that being as I have said (in conformity with the language of all the old divines) *materially* good, they are to be performed rather than omitted, and thus they furnish a *stand-point* to the servant of the gospel, when he urges unregenerate sinners to engage in that initiatory process of seeking and striving, which in the great majority of cases precedes regeneration. Were they positively and intrinsically evil, their performance would be as unlawful as the perpetration of the greatest crime—and this is the very ground that is taken by those who contend that the sinner should never be told to do any thing short of renewing his own heart. I firmly believe that one great reason why these *timbers* have been spared from the dreadful shipwreck of human nature is, that such objections should not be made ; that the minister of Christ and the Holy Spirit in his common operations, might find some chords in the human soul that would faintly vibrate to their touch, some matter on which they might legitimately operate. Let others untie the knot in a different way ; but for my part I should never dare to tell the sinner that it is his privilege and duty to pray for regenerating grace, if there were not that within him so far irreproachable that the prayer which proceeds from it is of a very different nature from the belchings of the foul-mouthed blasphemer. Unregenerate virtues in short fail as to their principle and end, but being materially and in their own nature possessed of a certain kind of goodness, they are not to be *condemned with positive and abandoned wickedness*.

I believe that God has made such a gracious provision for sinful men that a solid foundation is laid for a free offer of salvation to all indiscriminately, and for asserting that every sinner is the cause of his own destruction. I believe that though unable to restore the image of God in his soul, he cannot plead inability as an excuse for continuing in impenitence. There are external and internal aids put within his reach, viz. the word of truth, the common operations of the Holy Spirit, and the mercy seat, in the diligent, honest and unwearied use of which, he may expect to receive higher assistance, or as our confession expresses it "*richer grace*" with the same certainty that the labors of the diligent in common life are crowned with blessing. The consequence supposed by some to follow from this statement is rejected with abhorrence; that a certain degree of *merit* is attributed to the sinner's exertions, or at least a *congruity*, which would give him some sort of right to claim the blessing independent of the Divine arrangement. Innumerable instances might be given of connections between events, where not the least efficiency is involved, and yet which are as certain as if they had not been entirely arbitrary. The Bible is full of them. Witness the destruction of the walls of Jerico by means so trifling, that with the infidel they are a standing topic of ridicule, the cure of Naaman's leprosy by bathing seven times in the Jordan, and the restoration of sight to the blindman by anointing his eyes with spittle. So far are unregenerate efforts from possessing intrinsic merit or efficiency, that they do not even *prepare* the sinner in any proper sense of the word for his renovation, in which he is entirely passive. They are antecedents to conversion for no other reason, than because God has *made them such*: though it is not denied that the arrangement bears manifest traces of the wisdom which governs all his counsels. It illustrates the benevolence of his character, and beautifully harmonizes with the great laws of providence, which never treats men as blocks and stones even when dispensing blessings most gratuitously. It is calculated to shut the sinner's mouth at the final day if he dares to allege that he is hardly dealt with, and is rich in encouragement to present duty.

Nor does the seeming inconsistency of the doctrine asserted with that of particular election, and the absolute dependence of the creature alarm me, or induce a hesitation as to the propriety of making it the basis of my ministerial addresses to the unregenerate. There is a distinction to be made on this subject, the neglect of which has proved exceedingly injurious, if not to truth, at least to the effective announcement of it. The government of God is of two kinds, *moral* and *natural*. The former is that which, as the great lawgiver and chief magistrate of his empire, he exercises over free agents, capable of choosing and refusing, and of being influenced by motives of reward and punishment. It is conversant, therefore, with *law*, *promises*, *obligation*; proclaiming to the subject what he *ought* to do, and *why* he ought, and what will be the consequence of obedience. Viewed in this light, the gospel is that gracious remedial constitution which I have described it to be. It reveals an almighty Mediator, who stands in such a relation to mankind, that he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; a quickening Spirit who can raise him from the degradation of sin, and adorn his soul with those divine gifts of which sin has robbed it; and a rich provision of means subsidiary to the attainment of these blessings, which, if improved with the earnestness becoming the high destiny at stake, will leave no room for the wailings of disappointed hope. These are the great facts on which we build the sinner's obligation, to repent and believe the gospel, and it was in reference to them that our Redeemer uttered that tender exhortation: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!"

By the natural government of God, I mean that almighty and all pervading energy, by which he executes the decrees and purposes of his eternal mind in relation to every thing that comes to pass. In this character he acts with perfect independence of the will of his creature, exhibiting himself as the great *I am*, the *Alpha and Omega*, the *beginning* and the *end*. All things that live and move, live and move in him, as the continued source of their existence, and the vital principle of their activity. Nothing falls out contrary to or beside his sovereign pleasure. In his counsels there is no uncertainty nor contingency; there are no hypothetical arrangements. This government stands in bold and strong relief to his moral administration. The latter is often frustrated in its purposes through the free-will of the creature which it has bound itself to respect; the former *never*; for it puts in requisition all the resources of omnipotence. The latter only declares what *should* be; the former pronounces in every case the inexorable *shall*. The latter places God at the mercy, (if I may so speak,) of his creature; the former wipes away the stain, and places the creature where he ought to be, under the footstool of God. How, sadly, for example, was moral government at fault when Adam violated the great federal constitution, which so much care had been taken to protect from violation! But the other saw in it the exact fulfilment of its own high and mysterious purposes. The Israelites in the time of Moses were

promised the land of Canaan, and no condition was required of them beyond their power to perform. Yet they rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. Who will dare to insinuate that the Great being was disappointed by the issue? The Jews were under every obligation to refrain from doing violence to our blessed Lord, and refraining was assuredly not beyond the range of physical or even moral ability. Yet they "crucified him," and Peter, as if to vindicate the divine administration against the charge of weakness or ignorance, expressly tells us that he was delivered up by the "determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God."

Without pretending to reveal the "hidden links of harmony," between these two classes of facts, I am fully satisfied with believing them and making use of the distinction for every purpose to which it may fairly be applied. It is of great moment in the present connection. As the *moral governor*, God has made sufficient provision for sinful creatures. The blood of Christ is sufficient—the renovating power of the Spirit is sufficient—the outward and internal means of grace are sufficient. But the fact, the undeniable and universal fact, is, that the *sinner does not improve his advantages so as to secure the end*. As Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, as Israel refused to go up and possess the land, as the Jews refused to honor the Messiah, but persecuted him to the death, so men under the preaching of the gospel "having eyes to see, see not, having ears to hear, hear not, neither do they understand." If asked to give a reason lying farther back than their own perverse wills, I can only reply, by exclaiming: "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The holy and mighty Sovereign of the universe, in execution of designs concerning which he will not suffer himself to be questioned, withholds those effusions of energy and vital influence which would have drawn forth their powers into appropriate action, and secured a full improvement on their part of offered mercies. He leaves them to themselves, to that natural defectibility which enters into our very idea of a creature, and cannot be separated from it by the most refined abstraction. To this statement we allow no exception, not even in the case of the elect. All misimprove the gifts bestowed upon them: all are unprofitable servants who bury their talents in the earth. But here the infinite loving kindness of God their Saviour appears, that the guilt of despising the offers of mercy contracted by them equally with others is *not laid to their account*. God does not withdraw his assistance when it has been forfeited by their repeated rebellions, but continues to urge and importune them by his word and Spirit, allowing them no rest of conscience, embittering their worldly comforts, rousing them from their frequent torpors by new impulses from day to day, until they are led by his strong though gentle hand to the point, at which the "new creature" is formed within them to the praise of the glory of his grace. All the dispensations of his Providence are arranged in subserviency to this premeditated result. Every step is ordered; and the most trifling incident in common life is a link in that golden chain by which he draws the objects of his everlasting love to his parental bosom, so that the simple and precise reason why the salvation of the gospel meets with such a different reception from men, is the solution given by the apostle, "The *election* hath obtained it, the rest are blinded."

Viewed in this light and in connection with natural government, the means of spiritual renovation are not so properly helps placed within reach of the unregenerate, about to be efficacious in proportion to their activity in improving them, as the instruments by which God executes his sovereign purposes *in spite* of their inertness and opposition. They are *his* means, rather than the *sinner's*, and the issue will redound exclusively to the praise of his great name.

Now when I ask which of these views lies at the foundation of moral obligation; which of them I must press on my unrenowned hearer when I tell him to repent and believe the gospel; I answer without hesitation, that it is the consideration of God in his *rectoral* or *moral* capacity, and that consideration only. With the secret purposes of the Holy One, with the mysterious agencies which he employs in accomplishing them, I have no concern. Whether a sinner, within reach of the preacher's voice, be elect or non-elect, is a question which should never come across his imagination. So sure as he parleys with it a single moment, it will cast its dark shadow over him in his ministerial work. "Secret things belong unto the Lord, but the things which are revealed belong to us and our children, that we may do them." The "things that are revealed" are the great principles of the gospel as a gracious provision for sinful men. They are the doctrines of an all-sufficient Saviour, a sanctifying Spirit, and a glorious immortality. Means and helps of every kind suited to a rational nature are supplied, and an *unqualified* intimation is given, that "if we seek we shall find; if we knock, it shall be opened." Why the minister of Christ should not exhibit these truths as fearlessly and frankly as if there were no other in the world, I am quite unable to understand. So the apostles preached, and the more closely they are followed, the greater will be the success attending our ministrations. Indeed, to suffer our minds or those of our hearers to be disturbed in the discussion of obligation by any side-

glances into the deep and fathomless abyss of natural government, appears to me little less than a gross absurdity. I find no sermons constructed on such a principle in the word of God. Moses announced the Divine will to the Egyptian monarch, that he should let the people go, without feeling the necessity of guarding his proposition, by assuring him that his disobedience was already provided for in the Divine purpose.—With the same freedom, he asserted the duty and right of his nation to go up and possess the promised land, though they were destined, with a few solitary exceptions, to fall in the wilderness. So Jesus preached to his murderers, though he knew that for this very end he came into the world that he might perish by their hands. Election, I believe to be not only a true but a godly and edifying doctrine. It must be exhibited, however, in its proper connections—resembling those potent medicines which, injudiciously administered, *kill* instead of *cure*. The omission of it and of the other truths belonging to the same class, which is charged upon my sermon as a serious fault, was not an oversight, but the result of calm deliberation. The discourse was intended to press upon the sinner a sense of his privileges and responsibility; and I studiously avoided a subject which, besides its entire irrelevancy, would, if noticed, have awakened new objections in his mind. Such prudence and circumspection I find prescribed to me in the admirable canon of our church on *Divine Predestination*. As the doctrine of election is clearly revealed in the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament, so it is still to be published in *due time and place* in the church of God, for which it was peculiarly designed; provided it be done with reverence, in the spirit of discretion and piety, for the glory of God's most holy name, and for enlivening and comforting his people without vainly attempting to investigate the secret ways of the most High.

Professor M'Clelland's Case.

Tuesday morning, June 10.—Mr. Labagh offered the following resolution.

Resolved, That Synod has heard with great satisfaction the explanations of Professor M'Clelland on those points in which there was supposed to be a disagreement between his views as expressed in his sermons on spiritual renovation and our standards; and that whilst they are perfectly aware that certain expressions therein contained, and which have formed the grounds of exception taken to said discourses, are frequently used in a heterodox sense by those who are utterly at variance with our standards, yet they believe that such expressions can be explained in perfect consistency with the orthodox faith, that such explanation has been given of them by the professor in his remarks; and that, consequently, Synod can not only exculpate him from all charge of heresy, but honestly declare their undiminished confidence in the correctness of his theological views.

Dr. M'Murray moved the following as an amendment.

Whereas, the sermon of Prof. M'Clelland contains expressions which are not sufficiently guarded, and sentiments which in the abstract appear not perfectly to accord with the standards; inasmuch as it appears from the explanation of Prof. M'Clelland, that this has arisen from the nature of the discussion, the difficulty of selecting language precisely to convey his meaning, and the attention of his mind to the main purpose of the discourse, without having sufficient space, in so short a discussion, to guard against every objection; yet as Prof. M'Clelland has declared his unqualified assent to the belief in our standards, on the points on which his sermon has been deemed equivocal, as well as all others, and has given an explicit statement of his views on these points—

Therefore, resolved, that the explanations of Prof. M'Clelland be deemed satisfactory.

Resolved, That Professor M'Clelland be requested to publish a revised edition of his sermon, discussing more fully the points in question, and appending to it the brief statement of doctrine submitted to this synod; and that he be requested to furnish a copy of the same to be entered on the minutes.

Dr. Ferris thought the professor had failed to show that his sermon accorded with the standards. He had showed that he himself accorded with them—but that was not the question. Are our scruples about the sermon satisfied; so that we can put it into the hands of our people? He moved, as an amendment, the following:

Resolved, That this Synod do decidedly disapprove the sentiments of the sermon of Professor M. on Spiritual Renovation, on the subjects of Depravity, Good Works, and Grace, as at variance with the standards of the church, and deem the publication of the sermon most injurious and uncalled for.

Resolved, That this Synod have heard with gratification the exhibition and exposition of his personal views on the subjects above stated, as given by Professor M.; yet they do not consider him as having relieved the sermon from the charge of being at variance with the standards of the church.

Dr. Janeway wished for re-commitment and he would turn the attention of the committee to one point not satisfactorily explained by the Professor.

Before the question was taken synod adjourned.

Wednesday morning.—The case of Professor M'Clelland was re-committed to the same committee.

Dr. Ludlow, of the committee to whom was re-committed the subject of Professor M'Clelland's sermon, stated that they had had an interview with the Professor, and he had seen and approved the following resolutions, which the committee now unanimously recommended for adoption of Synod:

Resolved, That the Synod do not approve of the sermons of Professor M'Clelland on the Means of Spiritual Renovation, inasmuch as they contain sentiments and a phraseology which do not appear to be warranted by the standards of the church.

Resolved, That the statement since made by Prof. M'Clelland, touching the points of doctrine contained in said sermons, and his unequivocal approbation of the standards of the church, are so satisfactory to the Synod, that they justify an expression of continued confidence in the correctness of his theological views:

Resolved, That said statement be published in the minutes of Synod, and appended to these proceedings.

Wednesday afternoon.—After some debate, the resolutions respecting Professor McClelland were passed almost unanimously.

ART. V. *Preaching the Gospel, an Antidote to Antinomianism.*

The late Rev. Mr. B——, an Independent minister in Buckinghamshire, was told that a preacher of the Antinomian cast had pitched his tent in the same village, and had informed his auditors, what had never before been suspected—that Mr. B. did not *preach Christ*. Ministers in such cases, I believe, generally attempt to counteract Antinomian tenets by preaching on the nature and perpetuity of the moral law; and thus raise a controversy on the subject, which usually leads to bickerings and divisions; but Mr. B. did not so. When the charge first reached him, that he did not preach Christ, he replied, 'Perhaps I do not preach Christ *enough*—I am in no danger of preaching Christ *too much*; by the help of God, therefore, I will preach him *more*, and none shall out-preach me on the subject.'

No sooner said than done; Christ, and 'none but Christ,' now became the 'Alpha and Omega'—the 'all in all' of his discourses. He preached Christ doctrinally, practically, experimentally, perpetually; and his ministry became so thoroughly evangelical, that the fiend of Antinomianism could not get a cloven foot within his doors.

But what is *preaching Christ*? Permit me to answer this question by another anecdote. 'Mr. Robinson (of Leicester) preached for Mr. Cecil on several successive Sabbaths during his last illness.' 'What did you preach about yesterday, brother?' said Mr. Cecil. 'Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,' &c. (2 Cor. v. 26.)—'Right, brother, *Christ* your subject! What do you think of preaching about next Sabbath?'—'Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ,' &c.—(Rom. iii. 22—24)—'Right again! *more of Christ*: were I to preach again, I would preach *nothing else*.'—*Evangelical Magazine*.

NEW PUBLICATION.—The Gospel-mystery of Sanctification, opened in several practical directions, adapted especially to the case of those who labor under the guilt and power of in-dwelling sin. To which is added a Sermon on Justification, by Walter Marshall, late preacher of the gospel, 4th American edition. Philadelphia, published and for sale by W. S. Young, 173 Race-street; for sale also by A. Young, Canonsburg, Pa. Pages 234, duodecimo.

This is a new and handsome edition of a work, the value of which is well known among the friends of gospel truth. The book is very highly commended by the Messrs. Erskines, Gib, Wardlaw, Hervey, and others. It is also ably defended against the attacks of Mr. Bellamy, by the venerable Doctor Anderson, in his "Precious Truth." The present editor has been at much pains to render this edition both correct and elegant. He informs us in an advertisement, that "the antiquated orthography and obsolete words and phrases have, in some instances, been altered. Care has also been taken, more particularly to designate the quotations from the holy scriptures, with which the work abounds, as well as to correct errors, which had escaped observation in the preceding editions. While pains, however, have been taken to modernize the diction, no attempt has been made to alter or amend the sentiments; but the most scrupulous attention has been paid throughout, to retain the sense of each passage, as expressed by its author."

The price of copies will probably be from 30 to 50 cents, according to the different styles of binding. As the edition is not large, persons wishing copies would do well not to delay.

ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD.—At a meeting of the Associate Presbytery of Miami held at Sugar Creek, Green co. Ohio, on Wednesday, June 25th, Mr. Thomas S. Kendall was, after the usual preparatory trials, licensed to preach the Gospel. Also on the 24th of June, Messrs. John Easton and Alex. T. McGill, by the Associate Presbytery of Philadelphia.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Several communications have been received since the most of the present number was in type, which will be inserted, as early as the state of our pages will admit. The Resolutions of the Presbytery of Chartie., respecting a certain pamphlet; and some Remarks on the "Digest of Principles" &c. which the Synod at its last meeting sent down to Presbyteries, may be looked for in the next number. And also, if consistent with prior claims, the "Dissertation on Hades." The communication signed W. A. cannot be inserted, the writer not having given us his name, and we are not willing to assume the responsibility of adopting his observations.

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CHAUNCEY WEBSTER.

ALBANY, JUNE, 1833.

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